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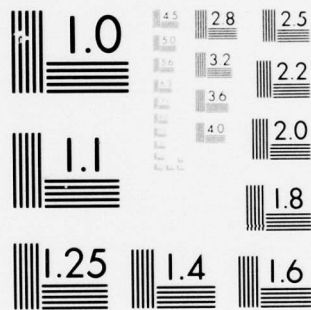
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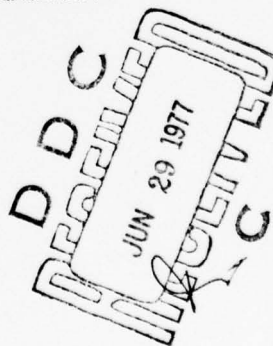
**WE SHALL UNDERWHELM?
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AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ARMED FORCES**

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**WE SHALL UNDERWHELM?
TENTATIVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT CBD
AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ARMED FORCES**

by

Anthony L. Wermuth

23 May 1977



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FOREWORD

In this memorandum, the author considers civilian-based defense (CBD), a relatively new concept for a particular kind of resistance by one nation against another's attempted domination, especially in the form of invasion. CBD contemplates resistance across a wide spectrum of effort, but the entire effort, while vigorous, would be completely nonviolent. The author thus distinguishes the concept from pacifist programs.

The military professional is not inherently opposed to a concept such as CBD; according to the author, he is skeptical and appraises the CBD concept with great care. In the appraisal given here, it is conceded that CBD, with further concept development, might increase in sophistication and practicality, but that, at this time, the concept is greatly flawed if considered to be anything more than a peripheral or supplementary concept for national defense. The concept is not rejected out of hand; but the author sets forth some of the principal objections to the concept which occur to the military professional in relation to his responsibility for managing violence (or in preparation therefor) in national defense.

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This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.
Major General, USA
Commandant

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

DR. ANTHONY L. WERMUTH joined the Strategic Studies Institute in 1974. He holds master's degrees from Columbia University in English and George Washington University in international affairs and a doctorate from Boston University in political science. A US Military Academy graduate, Dr. Wermuth's military assignments included brigade command; Assistant for Central Europe, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs; and Military Assistant (Public Affairs) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He spent seven years on the US Military Academy and US Army War College faculties. Following retirement, he served for seven years as Director, Social Science Studies, Center for Advanced Studies and Analyses, Westinghouse Electric Corporation. He has written many articles on civil-military affairs and other subjects in professional journals.

**WE SHALL UNDERWHELM?
TENTATIVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT CBD
AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ARMED FORCES**

This paper concerns civilian-based defense, or CBD, a relatively new defense concept. Inevitably underlying this discussion are open-ended questions about the proper role of force in society in war and peace; the morality of employing different forms of force; morality versus effectiveness. Unfortunately, such dilemmas must lie relatively undisturbed to any major degree by this discussion.

Each generation thinks that the great challenges it faces are more numerous and more serious than those facing previous generations; that exasperation with previous generations is warranted because predecessors have not been more effective in resolving perennial dilemmas; and that its own generation will produce solutions that proved too elusive for their forefathers.

The rising generation "taking charge" today is no different in this respect. Among proverbially intractable issues, the role of force in society is one of the most stubborn. The rising generation appears to want to believe that the role of force is not only changing but also *dwindling* in domestic and international life; there exists an increasing, if still far from overwhelming, body of evidence to support this view, which may or may not prove reliable over time.

Much of the available evidence is sporadic and ambivalent. Obviously, man's "right hand" keeps seeking alternatives to war, not solely because war is thought to be immoral but also because war is always inconvenient and dangerous; unfortunately, man's "left hand" simultaneously keeps generating and fighting wars. Which hand more accurately pursues man's genuine nature and interests?

A number of other dilemmas are related. For example, even if one approves of the use of force to defend one's nation, is there a feasible way to use force only defensively but not offensively? Can one ignore the experience of centuries that, once committed to employing force in defense, the more effective methods of defense include some offensive tactics (e.g., "the best defense is a good offense")? DeGaulle insisted that for a military establishment to be effective in deterrence (and, for that matter, in supporting foreign policy in general), it must clearly emphasize *offensive* military capability.

In practical terms, it would be difficult to separate arms and methods into one-sided capabilities of offense and defense, though some have expressed a wish to be able to do so. It would be even more difficult to construct a system that would be competent in one but incompetent in the other. In a book written in 1962, Helmut Schmidt (in 1976 the Chancellor of West Germany) expressed the wish-dreams of many democratic military planners:

The optimum goal of German defense and strategy would... be the creation of an armaments structure clearly unsuited for the offensive role, yet adequate beyond the shadow of a doubt to defend German territory.¹

But such a one-way structure, comprising impregnable defense but zero offense, is a will-o'-the-wisp in the real world of strategic equations. Many have sought for it and for comparably infeasible "pots of gold" over the centuries; no one has yet found them. No feasible alternative to war or the use of force in support of national interests has been so persuasively presented or widely accepted as to warrant excusing responsible national planners of even democratic countries from making contingency plans for using some forms of force in appropriate circumstances.

ALTERNATIVES TO WAR

In a number of respects, the search for alternatives to war enjoys a long and distinguished history; in other respects, as in the post-World War II growth in a number of disciplines, modern peace research got

underway only a decade or two ago.² For example, one recent effort among the perennial attempts to suggest viable alternatives to war was that of Adam Roberts, one of the leading figures in the CBD movement, at the 15th annual conference of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, in 1973. Roberts' paper was entitled "Alternatives to Existing Forces"; he selected three "standout alternatives": technology exploited as at least a partial substitute for manpower; militia-type forces to substitute for standing ready forces; and, the area of particular interest in the paper, civil resistance. Roberts conceded that this third alternative is "the most radical and controversial of the three alternatives, often associated by many people," he said, "with ideas of unilateral disarmament, pacifism, or defeatism."³ Roberts is correct, I believe, in discerning this recurrent association, one which is sometimes dragged willy nilly into the discussion by some CBD proponents themselves.

In order to focus on the merits of CBD as evaluated by military planners, I feel that I must first clear away the underbrush that Roberts pinpoints: the essentially irrelevant association of pacifist implications with CBD. This effort at clarification may be appreciated by some readers; others may consider it an intolerable digression—if so, they may profitably skip the next three pages or so. My purpose here is to *dispose* of linkages of pacifism to CBD, by confronting the fact that the field of CBD is occasionally obfuscated by writers who tend to link CBD with pacifism, in that both concepts have to do with *nonviolence*. Such confusion is occasionally compounded by some CBD proponents themselves, who seem unaware of or indifferent to the permeation of part of some CBD discussions with the flavor of pacifistic, "morally superior" arguments for nonviolence.

My remarks here about pacifism are unavoidably generalized. I am aware that there are variations and graduations of pacifism, as Max Scheler, Raymond Aron, Ian Bellamy and others have explained.⁴

Dr. Gene Sharp, an outstanding proponent of CBD, is not one to be insensitive to nuances, yet even he, like Homer, sometimes nods:

There are indications that when the struggle is conducted by nonviolent means, the group will gain additional self-respect not only because they are struggling instead of submitting but also because they are acting with means which are seen to be ethically superior.⁵

Much of the motivation for the search for alternatives to war, of course, is humanitarian; and many of the seekers, both civilian and

military, conceive their self-motivation to be highly moral. Some of the seekers confuse the morality of the act with the moral intentions or values of the actor, or fail to distinguish legitimate force-usage as a legitimate means to a legitimate end, in the age-old morality arguments over ends and means. To be sure, these issues, including civilian resistance, are highly complex; and the discussion of them in this paper does not pretend to resolve them or otherwise dispose readily of them.

As Adam Roberts noted, pacifism has endured as a seminal movement behind certain proposed alternatives to war. So far in history, the "realist," including the soldier, rejects most, though not all, of the pacifist rationale, not because he considers it undesirable, but because he perceives it as being premature. Having spent over three decades in the military environment myself, half of that time in the security-planning environment, I may be contributing something of value in this discussion by reporting my impression on the grounds on which the military professional rejects most of the pacifist case. Whether all or most military men agree with me, I cannot say, for I have not polled them; but I have reason to believe that, in general, most would concur.

*First off, the military professional does not question the pacifist case because he hates peace or pacifists, or because he is vainglorious or loves war, or because he is immune to moral distinctions, or because he is violence-prone (one can make a considerable case for his possession of the opposite attributes; but this is not the time or place). He rejects it because, given the long-standing and still-current orientation of most human beings and collectivities, he considers pacifism to be simply impractical as a defensive mechanism for any society in a dangerously imperfect world. He may be, as Samuel Huntington said he is, inclined towards a pessimistic view of man. He may be willing to admit that most people are not predators and are generally peaceful; but such people constitute no challenge to his society, or to his performance of his function. What with the repeated eruptions of violent attempts at takeover in the world, it is obvious that predators have not disappeared. So long as there are *any* predators around, able and willing to endanger the society that he is committed to protect, the military professional (and civilian officials sharing responsibility for the nation's security) must worry about the relatively few predators who *do* exist (in control of powerful masses and forces), rather than be impressed by large numbers who are not predators.*

To the convictions of *some* pacifists that they occupy some higher moral ground, resistance by the military professional becomes more

complex. To warrant acceptance of such an argument, one would have to concede that violence at all times and in all places is morally inferior to nonviolence. In my opinion, no such concession need be made. The soldier who risks (let alone one who loses) his life in legitimized military behavior defending a proper cause has no apologies to make to those who would, in advance, concede defeat, surrender, or submission to predators on the grounds that nonviolent submission is morally superior to resistance, violent or nonviolent.

Here again, the problem of definition arises. What, asks the observer, is a "proper cause"? Without exploring a more analytical response, I offer the classic rationale of "the just war."⁶ An even more advanced moral issue may be involved. The military professional may have grounds for considering some pacifist behavior to be parasitic, and consequently itself immoral, when the pacifist citizen refuses to undergo the risks of participation in "appropriate" violence in defense of a society while continuing to participate in enjoyment of the benefits, including peace, provided by that society—some of which, such as the security that makes prosperity possible, having been provided at the expense of the fighter's agony and blood.

In his provocative book, *The Denial of Death*, Ernest Becker wrote:

We admire most the courage to face death; we give such valor our highest and most constant adoration . . . When we see a man bravely facing his own extinction, we rehearse the greatest victory we can imagine.⁷

As the Bible says (and many a soldier has believed that the passage was intended to apply to him): "Greater love no man hath, than to lay down his life for his friend"—that is, for his people, his society. In June 1971, the Southern Baptist Convention refused to adopt a proposed statement that there were "moral ambiguities" in the Vietnam War; said the Rev. William Brock from the Convention floor: "When a man lays down his life for another, that is not moral ambiguity."⁸

Nevertheless, military men have usually extended enormous respect to the kind of conscientious objector who, for example, refuses to perform violent actions himself out of a spiritualized respect for human life, but who agrees to serve—say, as a combat medic—in the same environment of risks as the combat soldier. Some have proved to be as brave and as dedicated as the bravest fighter.

At this point, I should prefer to finesse further discussion of moralistic arguments for pacifism as an alternative to war and armed defense, although I hope to return briefly to the subject in evaluative

discussion of CBD later in this essay. I should like, in fact, to avoid here the whole complex pacifist rationale, but it cannot be totally bypassed; for some assumptions about morality lie at the heart of anyone's *insistence on nonviolence* in defense of one's society. Any thoughtful, probing evaluation of CBD by a military establishment must, in order to be adequate, explore morality in relation to CBD.

In any event, it is important to establish that CBD is not a pacifist concept; it does embrace nonviolence exclusively, but it means to *resist*. In this paper, I submit, the bulk of the discussion should address CBD as a feasible and prudent alternative to maintenance by the United States of armed forces.

Thus, in turning away from discussion of the pacifist rationale, it may need saying once more that CBD is not advanced by its proponents as a concept of pacifism or passivity; CBD is defensive—it means to defend a society by vigorous active resistance, but without using armed or other kinds of violence. This concept of CBD has emerged within the past two decades, and is widely considered, in fact, to be rather new. This general alternative is sometimes referred to under several names: “civilian-based defense,” “civilian resistance,” “nonviolent action,” “mass noncooperation and defiance,” and others. But these terms do not all mean the same thing; there are variations in concept associated with each term. I hope that none of the various details of difference are so indispensable as to vitiate the following discussion, which lumps them generally under the loose rubric of “civilian-based defense,” or “CBD.”

Perhaps, before explaining and analyzing CBD, I should make clear at the outset that I am not interested in enfeebling or neutralizing this provocative new concept. My brief assessment is not particularly favorable; but I hope to leave room for more perspicacious analyses that might find more favor in it than I do. Perhaps the description of “a clarifier” by Rubin Gotesky will fit reasonably well around my role here:

‘Clarification’ should be taken to mean at least this: the clarifier does not believe he has found a solution, but he does believe he offers . . . evidence that certain ways of thinking and doing are *not* solutions . . .⁹

Gotesky goes further than my intention; I only *suggest* that certain components of reality seem unfavorable to extensive acceptance of CBD in any near future.

In any event, we should first consult here explanation of just what

CBD is, or purports to be. For explanation, I shall have recourse, mainly but not exclusively, to proponents of the CBD concept. This is CBD, as defined by Gene Sharp:

A defense policy for the preservation of a society's freedom against possible internal threats (as *coup d'etat*) or external threats (as invasion) by advance preparations to resist such usurpations with civilian struggle applied by the whole population. The aim is to deter or to defeat such attempts not simply at altering the will of the usurper but by making successful usurpations impossible through massive and selective noncooperation and defiance by the citizens. It is thus adoption of the technique of nonviolent action to develop a national defense policy as a practical substitute for military defense and nuclear deterrence.¹⁰

RESISTANCE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

CBD is a particular facet of a larger concept of nonviolent action. The broader concept has been described as a

technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not an attempt to avoid or ignore conflict. It is one response to the problem of how to act effectively in politics, especially how to wield power effectively.¹¹

An important, though far from exclusive, element of the nonviolent idea is its address toward the mind of the opponent. Clausewitz described war as the continuation of politics by other means; in the same sense, nonviolent action also continues politics by still other means, providing an alternative to continuing politics only by war.

It recognizes that a fundamental difference of opinion exists on an issue and seeks to resolve the difference by demonstrating that the opponent's frame of reference is wrong, or at least unworkable. It pursues its goal through the twin approaches of cold resistance and noncooperation, on the one hand, and intellectual and moral appeal to the agents of the opponent—his soldiery and governmental administrators—on the other.¹²

CBD for the first time became a serious proposal for explicit future policy in October 1957, when retired UK Commander Sir Stephen King-Hall (later Lord King-Hall), in a lecture to the prestigious Royal United Services Institution, proposed that a Royal Commission, or other official body, formally investigate the feasibility for national defense of prepared nonviolent resistance to deter and resist potential invaders.¹³

In 1964 a small private international conference was held at Oxford focusing on the nature and problems of CBD. One outcome of the conference was the book *Civilian Resistance as a National Defense*, edited by Adam Roberts,¹⁴ with contributions by Gene Sharp, Thomas C. Schelling, B. H. Liddell Hart, and others. In subsequent years, conferences on the concept were held in Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States; and low-profile study emerged in the United States, the Scandinavian countries, and elsewhere in Europe.¹⁵

AN EXPLANATION OF CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE

In CBD, the entire civilian population would be trained in peacetime to wield several social, political, psychological, and economic "weapons," rather than military or other physical weapons, for national defense purposes. In advance, the society would conduct basic and problem-oriented research, planning, training, and other preparations. Defense, to the extent that it can be effected without violent means, is intended literally, viz, protection and preservation of the country's independence; its right to choose its own way of life, institutions, and standards of legitimacy; and to the maximum degree possible its own people's lives, freedoms, and opportunities for future development.¹⁶

In the past, military means and methods have been most frequently relied upon to provide the major share of national defense against violent intrusion. On occasion, however, societies have supplemented military means with nonmilitary activities, such as improvised nonviolent struggle and paramilitary means, such as partisans and resistance undergrounds. Over thousands of years of development of military methods, nonviolent action has remained a relatively underdeveloped technique of defense, with some impressive successes—which, unfortunately, remain almost unknown. CBD theorists insist that by advance research, analysis, planning, preparations, and training, the potential effectiveness of CBD could doubtless be enhanced. If developed sufficiently, it is argued, nonviolent techniques could enable the population as a whole to defend itself effectively against foreign invasions and *coups d'état*.¹⁷ Organization and training in advance are not regarded by CBD proponents as negligible facets of the concept, but as critical. Most instances of CBD ineffectiveness, as cited by critics of CBD, generate the response from CBD proponents that only *spontaneous* CBD was available or employed, and that genuine CBD was not actually tried in that *advance* training along CBD lines was never provided.

An invasion for ideological and indoctrination purposes, for example, could generate a domestic response involving noncooperation and defiance by schools, newspapers, radio, television, churches, all levels of government; the general population could attempt to reject indoctrination attempts in order to reassert democratic or cultural principles. An attack aimed at economic exploitation could be resisted by means of boycotts or strikes, or noncooperation by experts, management, workers, and officials.

An internal *coup d'etat* could be met by the noncooperation of civil servants and bureaucrats, government agencies, state and local governments, police departments, and virtually all the social institutions and the general population as a whole, in order to deny legitimacy to usurpers and to prevent consolidation of effective control.¹⁸

Training in advance of crises would, if necessary, be imposed on the whole population and members of all its institutions; so that in crises the society's social, political, and economic institutions, while retaining democratic self-direction, would be prepared to convert themselves rapidly to organizations geared to collective defense against invaders or usurpers.¹⁹

Another fundamental element of the concept is "transarmament" (activist) of the state, as opposed to disarmament (pacifist). Transarmament envisions advance preparations to insure an optimum national capability to resist across the spectrum of specific threats. Specific preparations for CBD would replicate traditional types of military preparations in many respects—"maneuvers"; mock demonstrations; disruption of public services, communications, and transportation systems; and creating upheaval in economic and social conditions. By CBD's preplanned design, nothing would work, except for those functions considered vital to the survival of the threatened society; and many of those functions might be conducted only on a clandestine basis.²⁰

There are, even among CBD proponents, many views regarding the form which CBD should take, depending upon the size of the country involved, its political situation, and the perspective of the particular CBD proponent. Perfectionist CBD writers (what Atkeson calls "purists") choose to rule out all forms of violence in struggles, even "scorched-earth" action or other violence against one's own property.²¹ Perfectionists generally prefer the extreme view that CBD should constitute the sole effective means for national defense. On the other hand, more pragmatic CBD writers (what Atkeson calls

"revisionists") see advantages to blending CBD and military defense to fit the country involved; they appear to have low expectation of adoption of the policy of CBD by the major powers, expecting instead that smaller countries are more likely to realize opportunities for partial transarmament. At the same time, the more pragmatic proponents tend to be less consistent in ethical terms but more concerned with providing a range of effective means of defense.²²

It has been claimed that the perfectionist concept of CBD will provide a more nearly total type of defense than the military system since it will involve the whole population and all its institutions in the defense struggle; because of such total participation in nonviolent means, the concept, it is asserted, may be said to harbor intrinsic democratic qualities.

Some theorists of civilian-based defense have suggested it as a possible full substitute, now, for military defense. Others perceive that full substitution of CBD for military establishments is not at all feasible now but consider it possible within the "foreseeable" future.²³

EXAMPLES AND MEANS

Proponents of CBD suggest that many instances of nonviolent action by unarmed groups have been successful; these are considered to have shaped the course of political events, such as pre-Revolutionary episodes in America when the colonists refused to pay taxes, import goods, or obey the laws of England. Without authorization of their sovereign, they severed social and economic contact with the British authorities, and established their own independent political institutions²⁴ (this example will be the subject of later comment in this paper).

Among other examples of successful nonviolence suggested are the Gandhian independence campaign in India in the 1930's and the civil rights movement in the United States in the last decade. Some CBD proponents also point to the early stages of the Czechoslovakian crisis in 1968 in which, they suggest, the Czechs held out with their own evolving political system longer and with less cost in lives and property than they would have suffered had they opted for a military defense in the face of the massive attack mounted by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies.²⁵

Professor Gene Sharp, producer of the classic work in the field, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*,²⁶ has been referred to by Professor K.

Boulding (in a review of the same book) as the "Machiavelli of nonviolence" and the "Clausewitz of nonviolent warfare."²⁷ In reference to nonviolent means, Professor Sharp actually lists 198 different methods of protest and persuasion, and of social, economic, and political noncooperation, and of nonviolent intervention, including strikes, embargoes, marches, boycotts, lockouts, civil disobedience, counterfeiting, and numerous others.²⁸

This terminates our explanation of what CBD is. Because of limited space, this explanation has necessarily omitted a host of details, rationales, and arguments, let alone nuances that proponents of CBD might wish to have mentioned. Nevertheless, it is largely drawn from the writings of CBD proponents, and it is my hope that I have not done excessive damage to any important part of the concept.

GENERAL MISGIVINGS

Thus, some vagueness results from compression or omission here. However, it must be said also that general vagueness also characterizes a number of explanations given by CBD proponents; for, as Sharp and others concede, much data-gathering and conceptual analysis are yet to be performed, as well as wider dissemination of CBD arguments. If, as CBD proponents argue, CBD "has never been tried," then we have little real experience on which to depend for evaluation; without historical precedents, CBD must rely upon extrapolation of fragments as it is projected into future, speculative environments. Whether or not CBD *can* or *will* be effective remains to be seen. Here, we are able to confront only some of the major CBD themes advanced so far and either to weigh the arguments starkly on their merits, or to assess, in the reviewer's judgment, their potential effectiveness against the contexts in which they are expected to operate.

It is in this sense, with no desire to slow down or divert interest from further study of CBD, that I articulate here certain serious misgivings about CBD that occur to me. It may be that, in the course of further study of the concept, proponents of CBD will be able to consider these misgivings and develop adequate responses to them that eliminate the need for misgivings.

Obviously, the world is being buffeted by powerful forces; but not in *every* major aspect of life and society. There is some evidence that *parts* of the world are stepping back from the brink of violence—the effects, *inter alia*, of nuclear arsenals, spreading literacy, revulsion from

past wars and violence, sensitivity to communications media, and utopian rhetoric. But repudiation of violence is not universal, by any means; witness Ireland, the Middle East, Portugal, Angola, Belize, Bangladesh, and other current arenas of conflict.

If the world does eventually turn more emphatically to CBD or other forms of nonviolence, historical experience makes it overwhelmingly likely that such a shift will be gradual and, hence, take a very long time to reach a significant stage. Simply to reduce current expensive military inventories and military budgets (now totaling about \$300 billion annually worldwide) will take a long time for large numbers of peoples to digest.

Thus, whatever normative precepts might appeal, it seems to me grossly premature for CBD to advance itself as *now* possessing the capability (or even potential capability) in major countries to *replace* armed forces, let alone to *defeat* opposing armed forces. The prospect of CBD's attaining a substantially more significant role in *defense of the nation against armed attack*, or of attaining, in harness with armed forces, a dominant role, appears slim; if such a trend develops, it appears overwhelmingly likely to take place gradually, step by step, slight shift by slight shift, always in harness with dominant armed forces, until the relationship between them shifts one day, if it ever does, into a partnership that becomes slightly CBD-dominant, and then, farther still in the unforeseeable future, eventually into a defense posture featuring CBD exclusively. *Only via such a process*, however, can CBD be expected to attain parity, dominance, or replacement status in relation to armed forces in an institution designed to defend the United States, or any other major country.

No practicable short-cut can be realistically envisioned at this time; and, hence, it is illusory to speak of CBD as *currently* possessing capabilities that it does not, and could not for a long time to come, possess. In a pragmatic world, no matter how attractive are the only available alternatives, societies cannot be expected to relinquish the capability to defend themselves with force unless, and until, an alternative candidate form has been convincingly *demonstrated* to be satisfactorily and equally effective, if not superior to, armed forces.

Despite such vagueness as afflicts some explanations of CBD, it remains to distinguish more clearly what, if anything, is new and unique about any capabilities of CBD, either individually or collectively, to *defend the nation with results superior* to those attainable with armed forces. Most, if not all, of the nonviolent methods and techniques being

enumerated as among appropriate activities of CBD have been long known and frequently employed in modern arenas of domestic and international conflict; some so-called "CBD techniques" are age-old techniques of conflict in general. Many have been used by the United States with varying frequency and effectiveness in relationships of nonshooting conflict with other nations, and also, in periods of shooting war, concurrently with armed forces operations. Thus, on the one hand, familiarity with such methods might make their use more readily acceptable as part of CBD programs; but they do not need to be part of CBD programs to be effectively employed.

Many such means have already been used for generations as discrete techniques, and as interwoven elements of collective programs eschewing violence in conflicts short of war, and also as elements of collective, combined violent and nonviolent activities undertaken in wartime—including monetary and fiscal warfare, trade and other means of economic warfare, sabotage, strikes, protests, picketings, noncooperation, removal of legal safeguards, refusal to provide critical services, detention, imprisonment, propaganda broadsides, and a host of other unarmed activities. In addition, internally, many such techniques have also been employed by various domestic pressure groups in American society, against other groups or against the government, and employed in initiation or response by the government, sometimes without force, sometimes with force. Thus, it remains to be clarified in what ways these familiar activities, when organized into CBD systems, might constitute *new* concepts, different from and superior to the same activities incorporated in older and long-familiar approaches to defending the nation.

In response, CBD proponents insist that one example of a new approach is *advance training* of entire populations in effective orchestration of these old methods.

Still another aspect warranting echo of an earlier comment is the perception of *some* CBD argumentation as flavored with pacifistic overtones. One evaluator of the CBD concept says that most CBD spokesmen, while initially differentiating CBD from pacifist doctrines, express a rigid perception of practically all war and violence as fundamentally illogical activities and as illegitimate means for reaching political decisions.²⁹ The impression is inescapable from *some* of the CBD literature that CBD proponents sometimes lean appreciably on the pacifist principle that nonviolent defense is always and in all circumstances the morally superior choice over military defense. But, as

suggested at the outset of this essay, such a conviction is still held by only a relative handful of the world's peoples. It appears that the overwhelming majority of peoples believe military defense to be superior in *effectiveness*, and effectiveness, also an element of a *moral* choice, is the primary criterion they apply in making their choice.

Thus, a number of peoples hold that in appropriate circumstances, in responding to armed violence launched against them, armed resistance is not only the most pragmatic choice but also the more moral choice. There is no universal consensus that nonviolence is always morally superior, nor is such a consensus likely to emerge universally soon. It seems to me that the more nearly central dilemma of morality concerns not whether or not one responds with violent or nonviolent means against aggression that is already violent, but whether one is *initiating* violence or only *responding* to violence; the former is widely condemned as immoral, but the latter is so condemned not by CBD proponents, but only by certain pacifist groups.

In any event, to the extent that some CBD literature echoes pacifist premises on this point, it suffers from lessened general credibility. It can hardly be expected that nations will accept CBD, or any other proposed mode of defense, on any basic criterion other than effectiveness. Thus, the ultimate compelling question to be considered by national planners is not "Is CBD more moral?" but "Is CBD more effective?"

There is a sense in which, as mentioned briefly already, the full concept of CBD from advance training of whole populations to nonviolent resistance to a coup or an invasion, has never been tried. Nevertheless, a number of examples taken from the past and advanced by CBD proponents as illustrative of CBD's successes seem to exaggerate the potential effectiveness of CBD activities against major political opposition, let alone against armed forces. For instance, to ascribe the success of the American colonists in achieving independence to various CBD activities is at least partially misleading; of course, the colonists performed numerous nonviolent acts of resistance that probably furthered their cause; their struggles may well have undermined control by the imperial colonizer and facilitated eventual separation, but their realization of their transcendent objective, independence, unquestionably depended upon the success of their own armed rebellion, supplemented by other actions, such as French assistance. No matter which and how many nonviolent acts they performed, they had to participate in violence, to fight an indispensable war, and they had to win, in order to achieve independence.

Similarly, Czech patriots in 1968 tested Soviet and Warsaw Pact tolerance for resistance in a number of "CBD ways" and over several months; "pure" CBD cannot be said to have been tried, for resistance was unplanned, spontaneous, *ad hoc*. But the Czech approach toward some degree of Czech autonomy within the Warsaw Pact was halted and reversed as the armed forces of the other Warsaw Pact nations poured over the Czech borders and snuffed out all resistance so that conditions in Czechoslovakia became worse than the *status quo ante*. This is a somewhat oversimplified analysis; yet, overall, one is impelled to ask: What kind of "successful defense" was that?

It might strike some observers that, in the long run, the Yugoslav example would serve as a more impressive precedent than Czechoslovakia. Perhaps all sustained instances of nationwide, popular resistance, involving both violent and nonviolent strands, would serve as more instructive early models for orchestration of all civilian resistance, eventually adaptable to greater emphasis on nonviolent strands.

No doubt, if one could find them and produce them, detailed case studies of past circumstances (not future scenarios) in which CBD has been unequivocally effective might be impressive in the promotion of CBD. Nevertheless, a national planner must choose between these two ultimate objectives of analysis: Is this case study being pursued in order to advance acceptance of CBD? or to maintain effective, economical (of life and liberty, as well as of money) defense of the United States?

There appears to be, so far, some degree of mutual exclusiveness involved between these two alternatives, especially when the protagonists are the United States and one or more foreign countries.

This is as good a place as any to record a particular line of misgivings toward expectations that CBD will soon prove viable for adaptation to US defense. If the problems of coping with an invader (e.g., training a homogeneous population in advance) could be confined geographically within American borders, CBD would doubtless appear more readily adaptable than otherwise. On the other hand, in reality, America's defense responsibilities extend way beyond its own borders, to distant climes and varied cultures; the orchestration of indigenous populations along common CBD lines seems likely to remain infeasible for decades ahead.

In scenarios dealing with possible *internal* confrontations, in order to warrant prediction of incidence in current America of an *internal* coup or insurrection, there probably has to be injected a large manufactured dose of exaggerated fears and dangers. They are not absolutely out of

the question, or beyond imagination; but there is little basis in the real world for taking seriously any such possibility, or expectation. Incidentally, if a coup were to occur in America, there is, in my opinion, far more likelihood that it would be mounted by civilians than by the military. Fears of coups by military persons are widely cited; the examples of military coups in developing countries are sometimes alleged to be "warnings" for America. Most of such occurrences are irrelevant to political probabilities in the United States. Among modern advanced states, we sometimes seem to be unaware that the most impressive usurpers of the 20th century were civilians, principally through civilian channels and instruments—notably Hitler, Mussolini, Lenin, Stalin, Ho Chi Minh, and other internal aggressors.

If probabilities of coups in America really are low, the relevance of CBD to any reasonably conceivable internal crisis in America also seems low. Even if this prediction were to prove inaccurate, most of the activities sometimes listed under the "CBD" rubric appear as likely to be readily available for employment within America in the future as the same activities have been in the past. Advance organization of such activities into a CBD structure might, however, make a difference.

Implicit throughout the preceding discussion is a need to identify one particular factor which would be likely to determine CBD success or failure from the outset: namely, the nature of the regime against which CBD would be undertaken. An invader seeking total domination but confronted with CBD or any other kind of resistance, violent or nonviolent, might proceed, as many invaders in history have done, to ruthless methods of coercion and control, such as mass torture, execution, and genocide. In such circumstances, CBD would not work, nor, one presumes, would any other form of defense be successful.

If one envisions the United States as the occupying power, careful and incisive analysis of every major society and regime in the world that might emerge to threaten the United States might be undertaken by national planners, in order to categorize nations as likely or unlikely to be vulnerable to CBD if and when CBD measures were to be exercised against them by American society. If one envisions the shoe being on the other foot, viz., the people of the United States as the nation confronted by an alien occupying power or by a domestic usurper, the nature and style of the power-wielder would presumably differ considerably from American methods.

As one surveys his own and other nations in the world, which and how many nations appear likely to tolerate CBD in opposition? It has

often been said (and even conceded by Gandhi himself) that the success of Gandhi's nonviolent movement in India, though assisted by a number of power factors of both violence and nonviolence, hinged overwhelmingly on the nature of Great Britain as a nation with a conscience. Had Gandhi's target been any of most other nations, it would probably have remained impotent. Even CBD literature concedes that CBD would be ineffective against a nation bent on genocide; worse than ineffective, it would be suicidal. How many nations (especially predators) can be confidently categorized today as nations with that kind of conscience? In a sense, all nations possess *some* "conscience"; but I suggest that few would qualify in CBD terms.

To the extent that democratic principles suggest sensitivity to CBD, Secretary of State Kissinger recently argued, in response to Third World rhetoric in the United Nations, that only some two dozen nations in the world can legitimately validate democratic pretensions;³⁰ the other 120 or so nations are controlled by authoritarian or totalitarian regimes, which exhibiting limited tolerance toward resistance by their own people, can hardly be expected to exhibit tolerance toward resistance by foreigners. If there are few, if any, nations that can be discerned now as probably aggressive invaders of US territory, and if among those few even fewer can be expected to be sensitive enough to allow CBD to be effective against them, one may be indulged in making an estimate that, whatever may be CBD's potential value to other nations, for the United States to expend more than modest effort on study of CBD at this time would be premature.

Another important misgiving about CBD to be examined briefly here concerns the questionable feasibility of realizing a major element of CBD programs: the training of the whole populace to carry out CBD activities in concert. Expectations are clear in CBD literature that the entire population or great proportions of it will necessarily be involved. But even a mere majority of Americans would amount to 110 million people, or more. When considered in relation to the strong and continuing emphasis in American society upon pluralism, it becomes exceedingly difficult to envision concerted action by vast numbers of Americans in doing *anything* for more than a few hours. (Is the largest American concerted action that of the 70 million who watch the World's Series or the Super Bowl on TV for 3 hours?)

Consensus does not come easily in pluralistic America, despite the utility of consensus for important national enterprises. Some enlightenment on the challenge posed by the American *system* to

leadership in forging an American consensus is shown by Lester Seligman, who distinguishes two among numerous extant types of national political leaders, who tend to emerge from different systems:³¹

- the irresistible national hero, personifying the nation's general will and higher interests, less constrained in installing national programs by diversity in the electorate; perhaps an outstanding modern example in a free society would be Charles de Gaulle; rarely has this type been endorsed by Americans;

- instead, the more typically successful American leader has been a power broker, the skillful executive, operating to achieve forward movement among numerous conflicting groups in the free nation; one of the outstanding modern examples is Franklin Roosevelt.

Another approach to understanding the difficulty of fashioning *and maintaining* even a limited consensus representative of a majority in America is made reasonably clear by Earl Ravenal in the following passage:

Vietnam demonstrated how fragile, tentative, and partial is the American social contract. But the confused condition of public support was not a momentary 'dissensus' brought about by the trauma of Vietnam. It is a basic condition that was accentuated by the Vietnam war. Perhaps this country was not destined to be a coherent society, but rather an ill-fitted composition of heterogeneous groups, most of which came here to assert their separateness, affirm their identity, keep their distance, and maintain their autonomy—at most willing to join in selected common projects of limited duration and purpose. Ours is still a precarious society that cannot long bear the strains, such as mobilization for foreign adventures, that expose the different stakes of these groups. Such a fragmented society is not a sufficient base for a policy of upholding world order and contesting a series of border challenges . . .

The trouble begins with limited wars. Most of the literature supporting limited wars has stressed their feasibility as opposed to total war. But that misses about half the point—the half that is relevant here.

Public constraints on prosecuting a war will be tighter as the purposes of war are seen to be more limited. Indeed, it is quite likely that support for war will diminish even faster than the scale of the war is reduced. If a government can either coerce support or anesthetize opinion, it may consider itself lucky; but that sort of thing becomes a contentious point in itself in a constitutional democracy such as ours.

It might be—whether fortunately or unfortunately—that a country such as ours can fight, and therefore ought to fight, only very important wars, or none at all.³²

Coalitions of heterogeneous Americans for common purposes are almost invariably fleeting, limited in scope, and highly tenuous. It is important to realize that such dynamism *can* represent strength, not weakness. In any event, to attempt to envision over a hundred million (or even ten million) Americans submitting voluntarily to, or engaging in, peacetime *training, for CBD or for anything else*, boggles the mind and strains the limits of one's credulity. To be sure, local and regional variations would doubtless develop, but some central standards of CBD training would surely be imposed. Thus, to the extent that CBD's effectiveness would depend upon such preparatory national training in America, it would appear to rely on a relatively weak reed.

Such effectiveness as any civil resistance program might manage to achieve in organizing Americans during the next three decades or so will probably have to depend on spontaneity, informed as well as possible by CBD specialists—a limited number of prepared individuals and small groups who have readied themselves against the possibility of being needed.

Moreover, as noted above, while cohesion and concerted action can provide an essential protective element for success against an invader from outside, *diversity* itself provides considerable, if less appreciated, *protection* for a society against usurpation from inside. The more I reflect upon this latter caveat, the more important it seems to me. A *trained-in-advance* element of the entire American populace, especially one approaching anywhere near a majority, would raise a spectre of greater fear because of its existence and potential misuse than any fear likely to arise in advance from the prospect of invasion. American society's reluctant support of trained armed forces, maintained under careful controls, is one thing; training of the preponderance of the population, for CBD or paramilitary activities or anything else, would be quite another. The likelihood of acceptance by Americans of any such program of universal national training, even on a scale much smaller than "universally," is so low as to be, in my opinion, dismissible.

There is little evidence on which to build expectations of massive confidence. Even the spectres of Armageddon that made us all uneasy when the Bomb came into existence, and as Cold War apprehensions were expressed over and over, failed to generate widespread support in America³³ for construction of numerous protective shelters in which the people would have to do little more than sit. How much more unlikely, it seems to me, are many Americans to accept programs that

would require their active participation in formalized CBD training structures. Maybe a generation from now, if indoctrination as to the necessity were to be completely successful. Even if wide acceptance of CBD programs could be foreseen, its realization is probably far in the future, beyond any reasonable definition of foreseeable future.

How long the period of "foreseeable future" will extend is, of course, impossible to predict. Because of our saturation with the nature, pace, and structure of affairs in our own time, we usually greatly underestimate the period required until a momentous change can occur. If an exceptional proposal catches fire among men, a great change may arrive with totally unexpected swiftness; is CBD of that kind of exception? Significant substitution of nonviolence for force in extreme instances of international conflict will not occur until almost all great powers, and many small ones, turn away from violence in irretrievable ways. To arrive at such a stage will probably take at least two generations in which nonviolence gradually achieves preponderance. If one generation were to give major acceptance to this CBD concept, especially in these times of rapid, pervasive communications, a program of nonviolence might arrive swiftly among the succeeding generation.

On these and other relevant premises, I arrive, quite tentatively, at the following conclusions about CBD:

- Enough of a basis of plausibility and possible utility exists to justify that a number of national institutions be aware of CBD, analyze its potential significance, and participate in institutional and other collective study and discussions on the subject.

- On the other hand, there does not appear to exist now or in any immediate future a probability that CBD will achieve, within the US context, and within, say, the next decade, a breakthrough into a status of relative prominence. Awareness of CBD will probably increase to some modest degree, but I would anticipate widespread indifference to the concept of CBD among most national security specialists for a number of years ahead.

I would hope that discussion of both sides of this issue would proceed on its merits, and not on the eminence or number of their advocates or critics. Certainly, quests for nonviolent relations among states have enjoyed certain degrees of respectability over the ages; but most such quests have sought much more, viz. peace, or the absence of conflict. Perhaps successful attainment of nonviolence is an indispensable interim step toward the attainment of peaceful relations.

Meanwhile, CBD has specifically received endorsements from such eminent humanitarians as Margaret Mead and Kenneth Boulding.

George Kennan appeared to be vaguely suggesting some form of CBD in his 1957 BBC Reith Lectures, recommending that in the event of Soviet-American disengagement, Europe develop a "paramilitary" defense based on the Swiss model:

... The training of such forces ought to be such as to prepare them not only to offer whatever overt resistance might be possible to a foreign invader but also to constitute the core of a civil resistance movement on any territory ... overrun by the enemy ...³⁴

Later, Kennan recalled:

There was something in my Reith Lectures for which I was more ridiculed, and for which I found less understanding, than anything I ever said in my life. This related to the concept of national defence through passive resistance—the concept of making it impossible for a foreign occupier to run a conquered country. Everyone laughed at me. There was a debate in the German *Bundestag*, Willy Brandt was there—'Well,' he said, 'you must allow every man some foolish ideas ...' I did not, of course, mean that one could erode the power of an occupier in Western Europe by relying exclusively on civil disobedience. But I did think that if a reasonable degree of conventional armaments could be supported by a trained and disciplined civilian population, one need never resort to the use of *nuclear weapons* (Italics added).³⁵

Rather than stand alone out on a cold limb, I should like to cite here also some eminent critics (or, at least, questioners) of CBD. Thus, while the foregoing passage appears to enlist George Kennan among the proponents of CBD, it also appears to take note of considerable skepticism among other eminent analysts.

Raymond Aron rejects the whole idea of civil resistance because

... it presumes that the age of massacres and exterminations is definitely over, and that a nation which puts down its arms will be neither deported nor reduced to slavery nor purely and simply exterminated.³⁶

At the 1973 IISS conference cited at the outset of this paper, considerable discussion was devoted to Adam Roberts' paper by half of the 210 attending members (political analysts, strategic planners, et al) from countries around the world. The rapporteur, Theo Sommer, subsequently reported that there was almost universal consensus among the discussants that none of the three alternatives suggested by Adam

Roberts presented really viable *alternatives*, although each might serve as a useful *supplement* to existing defense establishments in particular circumstances.

With specific reference to civilian defense in various forms, the consensus was that such concepts might be useful in countries like Yugoslavia but not in the urbanized areas of Western Europe (for example, it would be simply too easy a matter for an occupying power to cut off water, gas, and electric support from absolutely dependent populations). In famous analogous instances, such as in the Ruhr in 1923, as well as in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the conferees held, occupying powers had forced resisting populations into submission, and then into cooperation. "Civil resistance," it was said, "requires either heroes or fanatics—and you can't count on a great many of either type."³⁷

Those well-informed conferees felt that no suggestion yet raised provided any real alternative to existing armed forces, and that it is more important to improve present forces along lines of structural reform already apparent than to look for seemingly revolutionary, but rather theoretical, models.

And yet, and yet . . . it may be that CBD will be borne on the wave of the murky future. Obviously, modern man is shifting priorities among his most important values, and the outcomes may include some surprises. Peace movements may continue to be regarded with widespread indifference, on the grounds that they still expect too much too soon, that they appear to demand all and hence achieve little. But CBD may grow in sophistication and acceptability as a more reasonable interim goal in which a society, accepting the inevitability of conflict and the reasonableness of self-defense, may invent practicable ways to diminish violence in conflict without demanding or expecting that conflict will disappear.

The intrinsic foundation of CBD rests soundly upon consensus among the nation's citizens. Since the vast preponderance of citizens are civilians, the concept employs the reasonable term: *civilian*-based defense. Since any defense concept (or any other critical directional thrust within a whole society) seeking effectiveness must eventually attract massive domestic endorsement or at least tolerance, it may be that CBD will survive the evolving context of war and the roles of armed forces, and emerge as one generally viable alternative to participation in conflict despite apparently increasing reluctance to invoke armed violence beyond certain levels.

I would not at all suggest that my subjective reservations briefly

stated above discredit or undermine the concept of CBD. I intend only to give pause, especially to unrealistic and exaggerated assessments of CBD that might appear.

This is a frustrating evaluation to be absorbed by this generation's hopeful proposers of means to achieve the peaceful ends sought assiduously for centuries. Nevertheless, we should encourage the proponents of CBD, and the proponents of other alternatives, to further study. We want to be hopeful that somehow, sometime, somewhere, one of the generations is actually going to effect a breakthrough in finding an intelligent, viable alternative to war.

ENDNOTES

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2. See, for example, Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Christian Pacifism in History*. Oxford, U. K.: Basil Blackwell, 1958; Ralph B. Potter, *War and Moral Discourse* (especially Potter's bibliographical coverage, pp. 87-123). Richmond: John Knox Press, 1973; Johan Galtung, ed. *Peace: Research, Education, Action*, (Vol. 1 of five-volume series *Essays in Peace Research*). Copenhagen: Christian Ejlertsen, 1975. Published in English. Galtung asserts that peace research was initiated in Norway in 1959.

3. Roberts, p. 38.

4. *Die Idee des Friedens und der Pazifismus* (Berlin, 1931) contains the published version of Max Scheler's lecture of January 1927 to the Ministry of War in Berlin, distinguishing eight varieties of pacifism. Raymond Aron refers to Scheler in *Peace and War* (Doubleday, 1966), p. 204. Ian Bellamy analyzes six types in "Peace Research: Means and Ends," *Survival*, May/June 1976, p. 118. For an up-to-date analysis of peace research, see J. David Singer, "An Assessment of Peace Research," *International Security*, Vol. 1: No. 1, Summer 1976, pp. 118-137.

5. Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973, pp. 785-786.

6. See, for example, Robert W. Tucker, *The Just War: A Study in Contemporary American Doctrine*, 1960; Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility*, 1968; John Courtney Murray, *Morality and Modern War*, 1958.

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9. Rubin Gotesky, "A Philosopher Hopes and Dreams," *Book Forum*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1975, p. 589.

10. Gene Sharp, *A Dictionary of Civilian Struggle*. Unpublished manuscript, Oct. 1975, p. 74. Dr. Sharp has kindly given permission for quotation here.

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12. Edward B. Atkeson, Brigadier General, USA, "The Relevance of Civilian Based Defense to US Security Interests: Part I," *Military Review*, May 1976, p. 26. This article and its sequel in the June 1976 issue had been previously published as a Military Issues Research Memorandum, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, January 19, 1976.

13. Gene Sharp, "Notes on the Possible Relevance of Civilian-Based Defense to the Short- and Medium-Range Defense and Security Problems of the United States and Other Countries." Unpublished manuscript. Cambridge: Program for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, February 24, 1975, pp. 1-2 (cited with permission of the author).

14. Adam Roberts, ed., *Civilian Resistance as a National Defense: Nonviolent Action Against Aggression*, 1968. (Paperback edition, Penguin Books, 1969)
15. Sharp, "Notes," pp. 6-7.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
19. Atkeson, p. 27.
20. Sharp, "Notes," pp. 8-11.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Atkeson, p. 30.
23. For example, see Sharp, "Notes," pp. 7-8.
24. Sharp, *Politics*, p. 76, and other passages.
25. Sharp, "Notes," p. 7.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Kenneth E. Boulding, *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1974, p. 140.
28. Sharp, *Politics*. See Part two of Table of Contents, pp. xii-xvi, listing the 198 methods.
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30. Bernard Gwerzman, "US Silence on India: Interference or Immorality?" *The New York Times*, August 13, 1975.
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35. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This discussion analyzes Civilian-Based Defense (CBD), early finding some affinity among some CBD proponents for pacifistic rationales, and setting forth the basis for the military professional's refusal to concede superior morality to nonviolence. Examining the main elements of the CBD concept, the military professional finds their rationales generally over-optimistic or infeasible or overdrawn (e.g., it is simply impracticable to expect the pluralistic citizenry of America to endure CBD training in peacetime). CBD has been weighed by significant numbers of international strategists and so		

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far found wanting--or at least to be premature--at this time. Contexts may change so that opponents of CBD might be able to expect greater receptivity to the concept in the future.

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